



Top: Fort Barry circa 1918, courtesy NPS - James P. Scholtz Collection

Hazardous Fuel Reduction at Fort Barry

A National Park Service hazardous fuels crew is working on a multi-year project to remove non-native blue gum eucalyptus and cypress trees from Fort Barry. The goal is to protect the historic buildings and restore the surrounding landscape to the condition that existed when the Fort was an active military post. The original trees that were planted have become dense groves, creating a wildland fire hazard and diminishing the preservation of history at the site.

Blue gum eucalyptus trees shed strips of bark and oily leaves which accumulate at the base and hang from the branches, creating a ladder that can carry fire from the ground into the tree tops. Cypress trees tend to accumulate dead wood in the canopy. These trees also displace native species as they spread outward. Removal of eucalyptus and cypress will reduce the threat of wildfire and will help encourage native plants to grow back.

This project will remove all non-native trees 12 inches in diameter or less and some larger trees up to 24 inches in diameter that are close to roads or trails. Once cut, the trees will be chipped onsite. Some of the remaining brush will be piled and burned. The large, historic trees that were planted in the early 1900's will not be removed.

For more information, call the Fire Education Office at 415-464-5133.



Left: Pile burning is a controlled and cost-effective method for removing vegetation debris.

Right: The 2004 Tam Fire in GGNRA threatened homes in Tamalpais Valley and showed how quickly a wildfire can spread in a eucalyptus grove, even in early May.

